

Local Authority/School

Partnership Agreement

2013-2016

Reviewed March 2013

Under the Maintained Schools (Partnership Agreements) (Wales) Regulations 2008

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FOREWORD FROM THE DIRECTOR OF LIFELONG LEARNING

I am delighted to be able to write the foreword for the second edition of the Partnership Agreement between the Local Authority and your school.

During my time as Director of Lifelong Learning, I have been impressed by the excellent relationship which exists already between schools, Members and officers of the Council. There is an informed and ongoing dialogue between us all and a genuinely constructive partnership, which has led to many improvements in the education service.

In requiring Local Authorities to reach partnership agreements with all their schools the Welsh Government note:

There is sometimes uncertainty about what LAs should provide for their schools and in turn what schools are expected to deliver.

We are working in partnership in challenging times. However, our values remain important if we are to secure the best possible education opportunities and outcomes for our learners.

In this context I am firmly of the view that clarity of roles and responsibilities is essential if we are all to work together productively for the benefit of children and young people.

IAN BUDD
Director of Lifelong Learning

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1. LEGAL AND POLICY BACKGROUND

Section 197 of the Education Act 2002 empowers the National Assembly for Wales to require LAs to enter into a partnership agreement with the governing body of each school maintained by the authority. The regulations impose duties on all LAs in Wales and governing bodies of schools maintained by them, including nursery schools, but excluding pupil referral units, to enter into partnership agreements.

The agreement must set out how a LA and a governing body will carry out certain of their respective statutory functions in relation to a school. The purpose of partnership agreements is, therefore, to sustain and enhance existing partnership working between LAs and schools.

If the LA and governing body of a school cannot reach agreement then the LA is entitled to draw up a statement in relation to that school.

Arrangements for the review of the partnership Agreement

This partnership agreement is intended to last for three years. Regulations require that it should be reviewed within three years of it being set up and at intervals of no more than three years after that. The Welsh Assembly Government recommends that the review should begin six months before the expiry date.

This agreement refers to several policies which by their very nature require review at more frequent intervals. The partnership agreement relates to the most recent form of these policies.

2.0 STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

This partnership between Flintshire County Council (the Local Authority or LA) and its schools is based on the following principles:

2.1 The LA and its schools have raising standards of achievement as their main aim.

Achieving this aim requires a continuous process of evaluation and improvement. Primary responsibility for standards of achievement rests with each school. The LA has an important role in supporting schools and challenging them to improve. There is a duty under Section 5 of the 1998 Act for all LAs to carry out all their relevant functions with a view to raising these standards. The LA's decisions about the nature and extent of its school support activities will always be tested against the it's priorities for school improvement. Schools have a right to expect high quality advice, support and challenge from the LA. The LA may commission others to provide the required level of advice, support and challenge. An example of this is the school improvement work commissioned through GwE.

2.2 Schools are self-managing

The principles of school self-management are well established. Schools are responsible for their own performance and are given the maximum discretion to make decisions for themselves. The LA recognises that unnecessary intervention is wasteful of its resources and can undermine a school's sense of ownership for the standards it achieves. Schools will take the lead in determining, in discussion with the LA and others, what needs to be done to raise standards of achievement. Schools are accountable for their own performance through Estyn inspections, published performance information and LA monitoring.

2.3 LA intervention is determined by need

The more successful a school is, the less it will require LA intervention. As 2.1 indicates, school success relates to the achievement of high standards in inclusion and learner outcomes. Successful schools are effective in enabling their pupils to achieve their potential in acquiring knowledge, skills and understanding. Success is intrinsically linked to the value added by the school to its pupils' progress and achievements.

Schools which are identified as not achieving their main aim of raising standards of achievement will be subject to most challenge from the LA. Intervention will only occur when monitoring has identified concerns and will be in proportion to the scale of those concerns.

Ideally all schools will be both successful and improving. However, inevitably at some time there are schools that will be identified as underperforming, when compared to other schools in similar circumstances. In these circumstances the LA must intervene to challenge and support the school to raise standards. The powers in the 1998 Act are designed to allow the LA to differentiate its responses to school performance according to circumstances. This allows the LA to intervene before a difficulty becomes critical. This capacity is reflected in the LA's policy and procedures for monitoring school performance.

2.4 When LAs and schools work in partnership they will have the most powerful impact on raising standards of achievement

This partnership will be based on a mutual recognition of, and respect for, the functions and contributions of each party. This particularly requires both schools and the LA to recognise when it is necessary for the LA to provide challenge and support to raise standards of achievement by addressing underperformance. This principle of partnership applies to schools working with each other. It also applies to the LA working with local governor associations, parent teacher associations, dioceses, other services within their own authority and many others, as part of its local leadership function.

2.5 Schools and LAs should always aim to deliver value for money

In planning and carrying out their activities, schools and LAs should always aim to obtain maximum value from the resources available. They should choose processes that will achieve an effective outcome at the least necessary cost.

2.6 Unnecessary bureaucracy should be avoided.

It is recognised that the LA and schools should not impose unnecessary burdens on each other. The LA should seek to reduce bureaucratic burdens on teachers.

SECTION 2

THE STATUTORY FUNCTIONS

SF 1 TARGETS FOR PUPIL PROGRESS, ATTENDANCE AND EXCLUSIONS

SF 1:1 Pupil Progress

LA	School/Governing Body
 Discuss and agree targets for pupil achievement and school performance with schools Discuss and analyse performance information, analyse and review targets Challenge schools when targets are not met Provide professional development and guidance on data analysis and target setting Publish whole LA targets for attainment at each key stage annually Provide annual reports and analysis of target and performance data for individual schools 	 Set rigorous, challenging and ambitious targets for school and pupil performance on an annual basis Provide the LA with the relevant information in electronic format by set deadlines Base targets on teacher assessment and/or test data Use performance data to support school improvement initiatives Transfer individual pupil data when pupils move schools using the statutory Common Transfer System Evaluate the quality of the target setting process by analysing performance data in relation to targets set Respond positively to the challenge raised by the LA if targets are not met Publish school performance data via the school prospectus and Governors' annual report to parents in line with statutory requirements Arrange for school representatives to attend professional development activities organised by the LA

SF 1:2 Attendance and Admissions

LA

- Promote continuous improvement and share best practice across all schools
- Assist schools in the process of setting 3 year rolling Attendance & Exclusion predictions
- Provide a mechanism for all schools to determine and record their predictions
- Collate and aggregate school predictions into county predictions to inform the Target Setting process
- Agree local and national performance indicator targets through the Target Setting process
- Annually publish County targets within Statutory Plans and relevant Service Plans
- Monitor, discuss and analyse attendance data in order to review target setting process
- Support the submission of electronic pupil level attendance data
- Collate and report exclusions statistics termly to the Welsh Government
- Design and develop reports to record and share school attendance data
- Publish an annual parental information guide

- Ensure schools set challenging yet realistic 3 year rolling predictions based on appropriate data
- Agree whole school 3 year rolling predictions with Officers each year and use the performance data to support school improvement initiatives
- Work with Officers to agree planning for reducing exclusions using current exclusion data and local targets
- Ensure schools record their attendance data on SIMS on a weekly basis for Primary schools and a daily basis for Secondary schools
- Monitor, discuss and analyse attendance data to support targeted interventions to raise attendance in the school
- The statutory function of the Local Authority needs to be supported by the school adhering to published Admission Arrangements. These arrangements and associated procedures for all new pupils, at transition stages and mid-year transfers are published annually by the Local Authority and made available to schools and parents
- Abide by the school admission and appeal codes of practice

SF 2 MONITORING, CHALLENGE, SUPPORT AND INTERVENTION

The LA has a published policy in this area which forms part of this agreement. It is called the 'Policy and Procedures for Monitoring and Supporting schools'. All schools and relevant LA officers have received a copy of this policy. It can also be found on the intranet and in the Compendium of School Support.

SF 2:1 Identification of schools causing concern

LA	School/Governing Body
Identify schools causing concern as part of the monitoring process using the following evidence: Reports from statutory school inspections Reports from LA surveys Analysis of examination, test and assessment data Pre and post inspection reviews and support LA commissioned monitoring, advice and information by staff of the support services Estyn self evaluations, reports and consultation	 Engage in a rigorous process of on-going self-evaluation to identify areas of concern Alert School Improvement and Inclusion officers as soon as an area of concern is identified Work in partnership with the School Improvement and Inclusion Service to address issues/areas of concern Act at all times in the balanced role of 'Critical/questioning Friend' to the school

SF 2:2 Support the LA will offer to schools giving cause for concern, to turn them around and to prevent them from becoming failing schools

LA

- Support and challenge the school through regular dialogue, giving particular attention to areas identified as having shortcomings
- Carry out additional visits to the school
- Draw up, in collaboration with the head teacher and Chair of Governors, a School Improvement Action Plan
- Monitor the school's progress against the Action Plan
- Support school self-evaluation processes through regular visits to school, scrutiny of documentation and observation of classes, when needed, to identify strengths and areas for development in provision
- Implement a range of intervention strategies to support schools in particular need
- Offer opportunities for staff to observe good practice
- Offer, where appropriate, the support of a mentor head teacher/system leader
- Provide advice and support to governing bodies on a range of school improvement issues
- Provide programmes of opportunity for training and professional development of all staff as identified by schools and statutory initiatives
- Provide detailed reports on progress to the Headteacher, Director of Lifelong Learning, the Chair of Governors and the LA's School Performance Monitoring Group
- In cases where Director of Lifelong Learning is of the opinion that the head teacher and/or Senior Leadership Team do not have the capability to secure improvement, this will be reported formally to the full governing body

- Work with LA officers, the School Improvement Service, the LA's School Performance Monitoring Group and other agencies to confirm and develop programmes for improving the quality of educational provision and raising standards of pupil performance in individual schools
- Work together with the LA to undertake a review of the school
- Draw up, in collaboration with LA officers, a School Improvement Action plan
- Establish a monitoring system to ensure that the Action Plan is operational
- Provide governors and LA with detailed and regular progress reports
- Promote and develop rigorous, effective self-evaluation processes as a means of securing school improvement
- Facilitate good partnership arrangements between itself and other schools, the governing body and the LA
- Ensure the professional development of all staff

SF 2:3 Support the LA will provide to schools in need, or in special measures, or requiring significant improvement

LA

School/Governing Body

Comply with requirements as set out in WAG Circular No: 28/03 School Requiring Special Measures or found to require significant improvement following inspection under Section 28 of the Education Act 2005

- Assist the school to draw up an appropriate and detailed Post Inspection Action Plan
- Produce a Statement of planned LA action and support for the school
- Convene a School Support Group, including officers from all services as appropriate to meet on a regular basis, monitor and evaluate progress against Action Plans and provide reports to the Director of Lifelong Learning and elected members through the LA's School Performance Monitoring Group
- Offer, where appropriate, the support of a mentor head teacher/system leader
- Provide support as identified in the school and LA Action Plans
- Work with the school to monitor and evaluate the School Action Plan
- Share progress reports with staff and governors
- Provide regular progress reports to the Director of Lifelong Learning, and elected members
- Once a school can demonstrate improvement, it will return to the agreed level of support
- In cases where the Director of Lifelong Learning is of the opinion that the head teacher and/or Senior Leadership Team do not have the capability to secure improvement, this will be reported formally to the full governing body.
- Where a school fails to improve, the LA will implement any of its statutory powers of intervention

- Work with LA officers, the School Improvement Service and the LA's School Performance Monitoring Group to produce a Post Inspection Action Plan
- Establish a rigorous monitoring system to ensure that the Action Plan is operational within the agreed timescales
- Provide governors, the LA, the School Improvement Service and the LA's School Performance Monitoring Group with regular, detailed progress reports

SF 3 GOVERNING BODY TRAINING AND REPORTS

SF 3:1 Governor support and training

LA

- Provide advice and guidance to Governing Bodies on their role and responsibilities in respect of the discharge of their duties
- Publish termly bulletins based on topical issues
- Facilitate termly meetings of the Chair of Governors
 Association, the principal means for the LA to consult
 and obtain views of governors and head teachers on all
 aspects of the Authority's governor training and support
 services, including issues relating to governance
 legislation and initiatives
- Shape the annual training and development programme, focusing on local, consortium and national priorities
- Provide specific training in respect of:
 - Roles and responsibilities of Governors
 - The role of the Clerk
 - The role of the Chair.
 - Health & Safety
 - Child protection
- Establish Governing Bodies, prepare and update the instruments of government
- Provide advice and support pre and post Estyn inspection
- Provide advice and support for the appointment of Governors
- Maintain a record of Governing Body membership
- Process Criminal Record Bureau checks
- Maintain a record of attendance at training and development events
- Provide advice and support via the School Improvement Team
- Provide advice and support to governing bodies for senior school appointments via the School Improvement Team and Human Resources Department
- Provide advice and guidance in respect of employment issues as defined in the Human Resources Service Level Agreement
- Provide advice and support in respect of legal issues as required. Where this advice is not taken, the governing body are responsible for any resultant costs

- Following self-evaluation, identify training needs of individual governors and the governing body as a whole and arrange support/training as appropriate
- Provide details of training opportunities to all governors
- Facilitate the induction of new governors
- Promote the attendance of governors at training courses
- Notify the LA of the named governor(s) for governor training, SEN and Child Protection

Provide advice and support in respect of budget and resource management

SF 3:2 The reports that the governing body provides to the LA on discharge of its functions

SF 4 DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TRANSITION KS2 TO KS3

LA	SCHOOL		
 Provide advice and guidance on current WAG developments in respect of transition 	 Produce and review annually the school's transition plans in co-operation with cluster schools 		
Advise schools on preparation, review and evaluation of statutory transition plans	 Include relevant and effective activities and processes with regard to the five statutory elements of the transition plan 		
Assist with the electronic transfer of data from primary schools to secondary schools	 Engage with schools listed in the school's transition plan in preparation for transition activities 		
 Advise and support schools on the statutory assessment and moderation procedures required to be carried out co-operatively at the end of Key Stage 2 including core subject and Welsh second language moderation Inform, advise and support schools in respect of good practice at transition 	 Plan, administer, monitor and evaluate any WAG grant in respect of transition and provide any required information to the LA Input and receive data via electronic means as required by WAG and the LA via Common Transfer File (CTF) Provide CTF to all receiving schools Pass on records e.g. SEN files to the receiving school on transfer of pupils Provide additional data where available to secondary schools 		
	 Adhere to WAG requirements in respect of assessment and moderation requirements Consider advice on good practice and act on where appropriate in order to improve the transition experience for pupils 		

SF 5 SIXTH FORM TARGETS FOR LEARNER PARTICIPATION AND ATTAINMENT

LA

- Provide support and advice on meeting the statutory requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009, and in delivering the six key elements of Learning Pathways
- Support collaborative working between partners by fostering close relationships between all members of the 14-19 Learning Pathways Network and develop the 14-19 working groups to support transition from KS3 to KS4 and KS4 to post 16, and to target those young people who are in danger of becoming classified as not in education, employment or training (NEET) at 16
- Develop learning pathways to meet the needs of all learners
- Ensure training is available for Learning Coaches
- Provide opportunities for learners to engage in appropriate work based learning
- Monitor the percentage of NEETs aged 16-18
- Provide PLASC training to members of staff in accordance with the terms of the SLA
- Provide support in accordance with the terms of the SLA to assist schools when completing their PLASC WAG return

- Work with network partners (duty to collaborate) towards the provision of a full options menu and timetable alignment to facilitate Learning Pathways 14-19 and to meet the terms of the Learning and Skills Measure (Wales) 2009
- Issue all learners at post 16 with an Individual Learning Pathways Plan
- Ensure the entitlement of all learners at post 16 to be able to access a trained Learning Coach
- Ensure that all learners access the learning core
- Ensure independent careers advice and guidance is available for all pupils 14-19
- Deliver the local curricula as prescribed by the Welsh Ministers
- Ensure all learners have access to learning equivalent to at least 2 A levels
- Raise the individual points score of learners in the school
- Set targets for achievement for KS5
- Identify all courses undertaken by learners and complete the "Post16 PLASC) return
- Ensure all activities which could be included are incorporated in the "WAG PLASC" return

SF 6 HEALTH & SAFETY MATTERS

LA SCHOOL

- Provide health and safety management arrangements (e.g. policies, procedures and guidance) for schools, including those required to:
 - implement the corporate policies & procedures, and
 - manage risks particular to schools sector
- Provide advice on risk management arrangements, including the provision of generic risk assessments and associated checklists to aid implementation in schools
- Provide advice to schools on the identification and control of risks
- Provide and/or arrange for the delivery of training necessary for health, safety & risk management
- Monitor and review the delivery of health safety and risk management in schools, via:
 - Inspections of activities and/or premises, and
 - o audits of management arrangements,
- Encourage schools to adopt high standards of health, safety and risk management, intervening when necessary to make the school and/or activities safe
- Provide occupational health advice and support, including pre-employment screening and/or surveillance.

- Develop local management arrangements for the purpose of implementing the health & safety policies and requirements of the LA
- Exercising day-to-day control of the school premises and activities, adopting safe practices in accordance with the risk assessments &/or guidance provided by the LA
- Co-operate with the LA, including its monitoring arrangements, and report any matters that may jeopardise the LA's ability, as an employer, to comply with its health and safety responsibilities
- Ensure that all accidents, hazardous events or conditions are reported & investigated in accordance with the relevant procedures, and to cooperate with any investigation of health and safety in their workplace so that causes can be established, lessons learnt and our performance improved
- Encourage employee involvement in health, safety and risk management at the school, and that an effective health & safety committee meets regularly which supports mangers efforts to develop a positive health and safety culture
- Cooperate with contractors regarding the provision, upgrade, repair and maintenance of the school premises that they remain safe, including ensuring that any defects &/or hazardous conditions identified within the workplace(s) for which they are responsible are reported & dealt with in timely manner, and - in the interim - areas of the workplace and/or items equipment that present serious and imminent danger to persons are isolated

- Conducting occasional inspections of the premises to ensure that risk controls continue to be effective, and that a safe means of access and egress is provided maintained (e.g. fire escape routes are clear, fire alarm system remains operational)
- Ensure that health and safety issues are taken into account when:
 - appointing and/or supervising the work of contractors, and that only competent contractors are engaged, in accordance with the relevant health, safety and/or procurement procedures,
 - choosing, specifying, procuring and/or introducing equipment and or substances into the workplace
- Ensure that any equipment, machinery, or dangerous substance, is always used by employees or pupils in accordance with the instructions and/or training they have been given
- Provide employees and pupils with appropriate personal protective equipment, and ensuring it is used &/or worn when necessary
- Ensure staff and governors are aware of health and safety training courses provided

SF 7 DEFRAYMENT OF SCHOOL EXPENSES OF MAINTAINING SCHOOLS

Although the occupation and use of the premises is under the control of the Governing body in community schools and voluntary controlled schools, the Authority owns the property and has the status of landlord with the school occupying the premises being the tenant. These responsibilities are very clearly and specifically delineated in the Scheme for Financing Schools (Section 48 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998. They are to be found in Annex 4 which contains:

- responsibility for repairs, maintenance and replacement in voluntary aided schools; and
- responsibility for repairs, maintenance and replacement in community and voluntary controlled schools.

LA

Provide advice and guidance on issues relating to the management of school premises

- Provide finance via the schools' budget for repair and maintenance
- Undertake major capital works relating to school premises
- Advise schools regarding their responsibilities relating to repair and maintenance issues
- Undertake works according to the division of responsibilities between the LA and schools as detailed in the relevant document (see above)
- Discuss and advise on minor improvements on school premises
- Monitor the condition of premises.
- Develop an asset management system which can be accessed by schools
- Advise and arrange insurance cover in respect of buildings, contents and other requirements

- Determine the proportion of the working budget to be allocated for repair and maintenance
- Agree a maintenance programme
- Undertake works according to the division of responsibilities between the LA and schools as detailed in the relevant document (see above)
- Ensure that the premises are kept in good repair and that the requirements of health and safety legislation in respect of premises are met
- Raise issues of concern relating to repair and maintenance issues with the LA
- Undertake minor improvements funded by school funds under the supervision of the LA
- Discuss the brief relating to major capital works with the LA
- Discuss with the LA issues of concern relating to health and safety
- Discuss insurance requirements with the LA

SF 8 CONTROL OF SCHOOL PREMISES AND COMMUNITY USE OF PREMISES

LA

- In exceptional circumstances give specific direction under the relevant legislation regarding the use of premises of which it retains ownership or maintains
- The LA in partnership with schools will seek out opportunities to develop their community role, in order to improve learning opportunities, promote learners' attainment and help to bring about among parents and other local people a sense of ownership of, and belonging to, the school. In seeking out such opportunities the LA and schools will give priority to activities which support and promote pupils' learning and the wellbeing of the wider community
- Provide advice and guidance on issues relating to the hire of school premises.

- Governing bodies have control over the occupation and use of school premises for all categories of maintained school, both during and outside of school hours. This is unless there is a school's trust deed conferring rights on trustees or others.
- In exercising that control governing bodies of all categories of school must have regard to the desirability of making the premises available for community use outside of school hours.
- Governing bodies may make transfer of control agreements giving third parties control of the premises for certain purposes if the objective, in whole or part, is for community use.
- Governing bodies should set appropriate charges and conditions of use for such letting arrangements



FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL AND ITS MAINTAINED SCHOOLS

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT WITH (NAME OF SCHOOL)

September 2013 – August 2016

I agree with the contents of this	s partnership
Chair of Governors	Date
Director of Lifelong Learning	Date